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LOCAL HISTORY

LOUTHER MANOR

BY THE LATE

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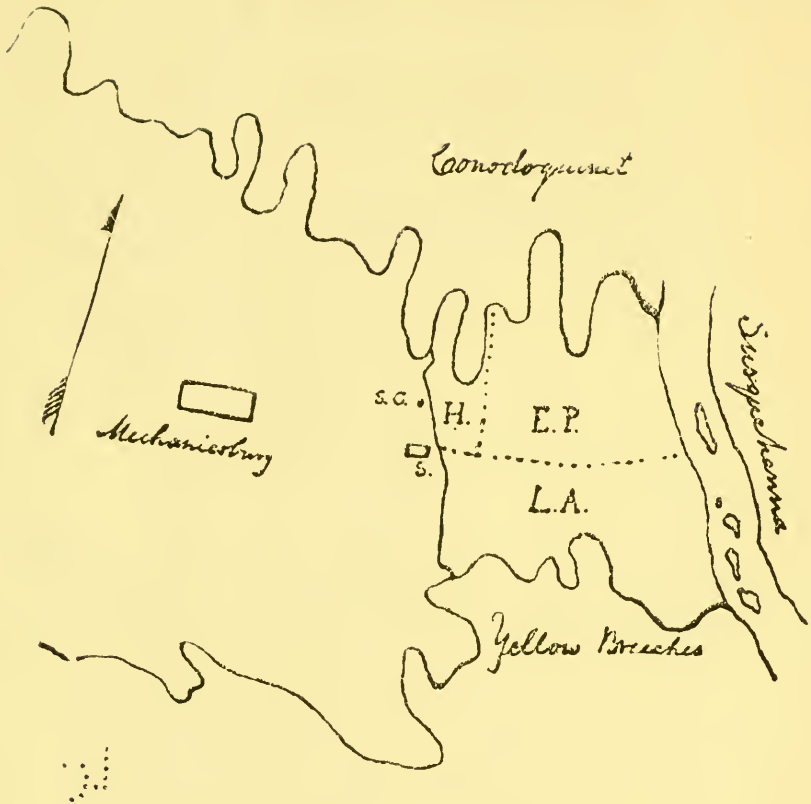
VII.

*Read Before Historical Meeting of the Hamilton Library Association, Carlisle, Pa.,
and Reprinted for the Historical Department.*

To those who are truly interested in the early and reliable history of Pennsylvania, it is a matter of regret that we have not had collected together a full and correct account of the several manors that were in the Province, their locality and limits, and which were so many tracts of land set apart exclusively for the Proprietary, and not immediately offered for sale. It is also a matter of regret that so much of misapprehension and misrepresentation prevails on this subject. We know that there were *two* manors within the bounds of what is now Cumberland county, as we have some papers of an early date that clearly show it, and yet we have never heard of any excepting that of *Louther* or *Paxtang*, (as it was at first called), and it is to be regretted that an error has obtained currency in regard to it. Hence at the

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EXPLANATIONS.

[The initial letters within the limits of the manor indicate portions of Hampden, East Pennsboro and Lower Allen townships; the other initials indicate the Stone Church and Shiremanstown; the western boundary of the manor is "the road leading from the Conodoguinet to the Yellow Breeches, past the Stone Church or Frieden's Kirch, and immediately below Shirmanstown," about four miles from the river; and the two creeks extend eastward about "eleven miles," to show what would be the greatly increased quantity of land embraced in the manor if it really extended that distance from the river.]

suggestion of some friends we furnish the following facts.

Within less than ten years the statement has been repeatedly published that the Louthier Manor extended *eleven miles* west of the Susquehanna river, whereas we believe that it did not extend much more than about one third of that distance, or only *four miles* instead of "eleven."

We do not know what authority existed for making such a statement in the first instance, as it certainly contradicts Kupp's statement, made on the very creditable authority of Col. R. M. Crain, in regard to the same matter—and his statement of 1846 must have been then known—and it also clearly contradicts the specific details of the original survey, than which better authority cannot be cited. The proof of this we will now give.

We have an old paper in our collection with this endorsement:—"26th Decem'r 1764. Warrant for the Resurvey of the manor of Louthier, Cumberland county. Returned, &c., May 16, 1765. Quantity 7551 acres, &c." It has the signature of John Penn, and is addressed to John Lukens, Esq., Surveyor General. (He was S. G. under the Provincial Government.) It also bears the testimony of Daniel Brodhead, Surveyor General, of April 1793, as being "a true copy of the original." (He was S. G. under the State Government.) This warrant is a long one and abounds in interesting statements relative to the Indians, but we will give only so much of it as recites the specified limits of the manor in question, which, by the way, was laid out in 1736 by the Deputy Surveyor of Lancaster county. It may also be here added, that the land included in Louthier Manor was part of the territory

acquired by Treaty from the Five Nations, at Philadelphia, Oct. 11th, 1736, and it was the *second* of the *six* treaties with said Indians for the acquisition of their lands. We now faithfully copy from the aforesaid valid authority the proper limits of the manor: "On the west side of the Susquehanna river, opposite to John Harris' Ferry and bounded to the eastward by the said river, to the northward by Conodoguinet creek, to the southward by the Yellow Breeches creek, and to the westward by a line drawn north a little westerly from the said Yellow Breeches to Conodoguinet creeks aforesaid, containing seven thousand five hundred and seven acres or upwards," &c. These boundaries correspond with those given in Rupp's history, page 356, where he says: "The manor on ConodoguINETTE was, as will appear from the following, kindly furnished by R. M. Crain, Esq., surveyed and divided, and sold by the proprietors to those first named after the No. and acres. *This manor embraced all the land between the ConodoguINETTE and Yellow Breeches creek, extending as far west as the road leading from the ConodoguINETTE to the Yellow Breeches, past the Stone church or Frieden's Kirch, and immediately below Shiremanstown.*" Just here it may be proper to remark, that Col. Crain, who died in 1852, is represented as "more thoroughly acquainted with the business of the Land Office than any other man in Pennsylvania," and served for the greater part of half a century as Deputy Secretary in that office. (Men of Mark of Cumberland Valley, p. 96.) We also know from the same authority, as well as old papers in our possession, that the Manor of Louthier was "surveyed at an early date." Again in 1765, it was sur-

veyed by John Armstrong and divided into eight and-twenty portions, and in 1767 it was re surveyed by John Lukens. As stated, it was divided into twenty-eight "Tracts or Plantations," varying in size, but the aggregate number of acres in them all is about equal to the whole manor as originally surveyed. The writer has in his possession several of the old papers indicating the No. of the tract, and the name of the original purchaser. These papers bear date of 1772, '73 and '74. When Rupp published his History of Cumberland county, nearly forty years ago, only No. 4, No. 12, and part of No. 17—but three of the twenty-eight—were owned by any of the heirs or representatives of the original purchasers; and, on this point, the writer cannot say what is the fact at present.

Now, in turning to the Atlas of Cumberland county, carefully prepared from actual surveys, and published in 1872, we have a plan of the county, having a scale of distances, (three miles to the inch), and from this plan we have here very carefully traced so much as includes the entire Louther Manor, as embraced between the creeks and within four miles from the river, as well as the land within "eleven miles" of it, as indicated by the western extension and termination of each creek. The manor proper incloses about the eastern half of Lower Allen, about the southern half of East Pennsboro, and the southeast corner of Hampden townships, containing the quantity of land given in the early survey.

On an average Luther Manor could not have embraced more than an area of about three miles between the creeks and four miles west of the river, as such an area would inclose twelve square mile, or 7,680

acres, and which is really between one and two hundred acres more than was actually contained in the manor.

As something worthy of notice, on the plan or map it will be observed that the entire land embraced within the true limits of the Louthier Manor, is the most compact or the very narrowest between the two creeks, forming of itself a desirable Reservation, and from the western boundary of the manor, where it touches the creeks, *each creek begins suddenly to divert or incline outward more and more.* So that, if the manor, as has been repeatedly alleged, really extended eleven miles west of the Susquehanna, it would necessarily have to embrace a vastly larger extent of territory than it really contained or than the actual survey gives it, and nearer 30,000 acres than "between seven and eight thousand." In addition to the land that was only and truthfully in it, if it extended westward the distance now claimed of "eleven miles," it would have to embrace, besides the half of East Penusboro', the entire townships of Upper and Lower Allen, nearly half of Hampden, a very large part of the large township of Silver Spring, about half of Monroe, and a slice of Middlesex, and in Silver Spring and Monroe townships the extreme distance between the two creeks is about ten miles.

Therefore, to declare as matter of clear and veritable history that "the Proprietaries laid off between seven and eight thousand acres of land *extending eleven miles from the river*, and between the Conodoguinet and Yellow Breeches creeks, for a manor on which settlements were forbidden," seems to the writer somewhat unfortunate.

Of course we can imagine a narrow

strip of land as actually extending eleven miles from the river, and as between the two creeks, and as embracing the given number of acres, "between seven and eight thousand." But in this case such a stretch of the imagination is certainly not allowable. Because the proper and naturally permanent boundaries of the manor, as detailed in the early survey, are: the *river* on the east side, with a well known *creek* on the north side and no less well known *creek* on the south side, and then on the west side "by a line drawn from the said Yellow Breeches to Conodoguinet Creeks aforesaid." And the quantity of land specified in the old surveys as existing within these clearly defined limits—that of 7,507 acres, or that of 7,551 acres, and which quantity does fully exist therein—could not possibly have extended farther westward than "the road leading from the Conodoguinet to the Yellow Breeches, past the Stone Church, and immediately below Shiremanstown." We can also easily understand, as both creeks are very crooked, that, by following their devious courses westward from the mouth of each, for the distance of about eleven miles, it might probably lead to the point on each creek where touches the line drawn by the old survey from the one creek to the other, as the termini of the western limit of the manor, and this doubtless was the way in which the survey was originally made, to ascertain the acreage of it. But *the line constituting the western boundary of the manor*, and which is really its true extent from the river, is, as we believe and maintain, only four miles from the river, in popular and intelligible parlance, and no more than four miles. And to assert that it 'extended eleven miles west of the

river" is alike incorrect and misleading. We do not believe that one person in a thousand, in hearing or reading such a statement, would suppose that the distance thus given referred to and meant the length so far of the serpentine or the incurved-recurved course of the creek! Just as reasonable would it be to assert that Lower Allen township, (part of which forms the southern portion of the manor), whose eastern boundary is the Susquehanna, extends *twenty-five* miles west of said river, because its southern boundary is the meandering course of the Yellow Breeches for about that distance! When, in fact, the true length or extent of the township from the river is not more than one fourth of said distance, or about six miles instead of about twenty five. Likewise, according to the same common sense method of speaking and understanding, the territory of Louthier Manor, in its extent from the river to its western boundary, reached but four miles, and not "eleven."

It is generally understood that the first white people came over the Susquehanna about 1730. They were chiefly Scotch Irish, to whom the Donegal Presbytery sent a supply as early as 1734. But it was not until two years afterwards that the Manor of Louthier was laid out. Was not the land embraced in it previously settled, in part, if not wholly? Is it not reasonable to suppose that the first settlers would move warily as well as bravely into a country belonging to the Indians, and be careful not to leave a wide belt of unoccupied land between them and their eastern friends? Was not even squatter sovereignty, with its preemptive privileges, practically observed? And while the settlers were willing in due time to purchase the land which they had com-

menced to improve, yet it was not an easy matter to dispossess them,—because they had settled upon it, and claimed their rights as colonists who had been desired to come to the country, and who, as a hardy and combative frontier people, formed a desirable cordon of defence between the savages and the more eastern settlers. (The Penn and Logan Correspondence, Watson's Annals, &c.)

As evidence that the land subsequently contained in Louthier Manor had been very early settled by the whites, we will be excused in giving the following additional matter.

It has been said that about 1724 the Delaware Indians moved to the branches of the Ohio, and that in 1728 the Shawanese, who had been the predominating aborigines of our valley, gradually followed them. Afterwards French emissaries tried to alienate them from the English. Consequently the Pennsylvania authorities became alarmed, and appointed three persons to visit them and persuade them to return. The following letter, addressed to one of the three, contains the inducement to return, and also evidence of an early settlement by the whites on the west side of the river:

PESHTANK, * Nov. ye 19th, 1731.

FRIEND PETER CHARTIERE. This is to Acquaint Thee that By the Commissioners' and the Governour's order We are now Going over Susquehanna, To Lay out a Tract of Land between Conegogwainet & Shaawna Creeks five or six miles back from the River, in order to accommodate Shaawna Indians or such others as may see fit to Settle there, To Defend them from Ineroachments, And we have also orders to Dispossess all Persons Settled on that side of the River, That Those woods

may Remain free to ye Indians for Plant-
ing & Hunting, And We Desire thee to
Communicate this to the Indians who Live
About Allegoning. We conclude

Thy Assured Ff'ds,

JOHN WRIGHT,
TOBIAS HENDRICKS,
SAM'L. BLUNSTON.

This enterprise failed. The Indians did not return. But the letter shows that the "Tract of Land" mentioned in it is the same about which we have been writing; that white persons were settled on it as early as 1731; and that timber land or "woods" really existed there. As the Indians did not accept the offer to come back, about five years afterwards the manor was there laid out.

It may be of some pertinent interest just here to add that, two of the three persons selected to visit the Indians who had gone westward were James Le Tort and Peter Chartier. The former was a Frenchman and Indian trader, who had his cabin not far from where Carlisle is, and after whom the town spring is named. The other was the son of Martin Chartier, a Frenchman who lived among the Shawanese. His son, Peter, (who was appointed an Indian trader by the Lancaster court), married a Shawanese squaw, and lived at the mouth of the Yellow Breeches creek, which was then known as the *Shawnee* creek, presumably because occupied by them; but it was also called the *Callapassink*, with reference to its curvatures, and this name, according to Heckewelder, is a Delaware Indian word. Not only is the name of these Frenchmen perpetuated among us by the Letort spring, but the name of the other is also perpetuated in western Pennsylvania by Chartier creek. The other negotiator was

Edmund Cartlidge, a prominent Indian trader, whose name occurs in the Colonial Records and Pennsylvania Archives, and who, in his correspondence with Governor Gordon relative to this business, reports more favorably of Chartier than of Le Tort, though the former at last went over to the French, and the latter has been regarded as a person of better character. (Pennsylvania Archives, Vol. I., pp. 299, 328. Historical Register, Vol. II, p. 250. Memoirs of Charlotte Chambers, by her grandson, Lewis H. Garrard, p. 12, and also Chambersburg in the Colony and in the Revolution, by the same writer, p. 12, &c.)

The foregoing statement we respectfully submit to the candid judgment of those who may be interested in the matter. We know that to err is human; and if it should appear hereafter that our statement is faulty or inaccurate, we shall be glad to revise it, as our sole object is to give the truth and nothing but the truth.

J. A. MURRAY.

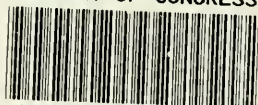
CARLISLE, 1885.

P. S.—We have also some old documents, written and printed, that indicate the existence of such a Proprietary Reservation as "Eden Manor," which embraces a few thousand acres of land in the north-western portion of what is now Cumberland county. In one of the papers—bearing date of 1746, and signed by "Wm. Parsons, Surveyor General," under the Provincial Government—there is a plan of the manor, an oblong square, which contains a section of the creek and some of its tributaries. The distances are given, and the number of acres. J. A. M.

*The same as Paxtang, Peixtan, Paxton, &c., where Harrisburg now is.

J. A. M.

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